

# Maine EMS



## Exam Administration Manual

May 12, 2003

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- **For Names and Numbers of Maine EMS state & regional staff, visit the Maine EMS website at:**

<http://www.maine.gov/dps/ems/contactus/index.html>

## ***I. INTRODUCTION***

This manual sets forth the Maine EMS standards for conducting State of Maine written and practical exams for First Responders, Basic Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), Intermediate EMTs and Paramedics and contains the information needed to conduct the exams, from planning an exam through and including the evaluation stages.

All examinations must be approved by Maine EMS and coordinated through the regional EMS office in the region where the exam is to be conducted.

## ***II. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION***

### **A. REGIONAL COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **1. Regional Coordinators:**

(a) Are responsible for determining examination frequency in their regions and are delegated the responsibility of ensuring administration of examinations and examiner training in accordance with this manual.

(b) Choose (subject to approval by Maine EMS) an Exam Administrator and Exam Proctor who are not associated with the candidates through service affiliation or recent course instruction. If a minority of the candidates being tested is associated with an Exam Administrator or an Exam Proctor (as previously mentioned), the Exam Administrator or Exam Proctor may still conduct the examinations subject to the provisions of § IV.B.2. - "Special Circumstances".

(c) Are responsible for ensuring that examination materials and equipment are available for written and practical exams.

#### **2. Administrative Support**

(a) Regional offices will process paperwork associated with the exam process in accordance with this manual (See Appendix O).

### **B. AUTHORIZED EXAM ADMINISTRATORS AND EXAM PROCTORS**

#### **1. Definitions**

(a) **Exam Administrator** is a person authorized by Maine EMS to conduct a practical licensing exam. Maine EMS staff, regional coordinators and other persons designated by the region and approved by Maine EMS are authorized Exam Administrators.

**(b) Exam Proctor** is a person authorized by Maine EMS to conduct a written licensing exam. Maine EMS Staff, Regional Coordinators and other persons designated by the region and approved by Maine EMS are authorized Exam Proctors.

**2.** The Exam Administrator and Exam Proctor are responsible to Maine Emergency Medical Services for ensuring the honesty, promptness, fairness and security of practical and written licensing examinations, respectively. Maine EMS Staff, Regional Coordinators, Exam Administrators, Exam Proctors, Examiners and programmed patients represent Maine Emergency Medical Services and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, helpful and supportive manner throughout the exam process.

### **C. APPLICATION FOR EXAM**

- 1.** All candidates for written and practical examinations must make application in accordance with Appendix C of this Guide.

### **D. SCHEDULING EXAMS**

#### **1. Licensing examinations:**

**(a)** Are scheduled by the regional EMS office or Maine EMS.

**(b)** Should be scheduled to closely follow the conclusion of the course.

**(c)** Must be scheduled in advance, to allow planning time for coordination with the course instructor/coordinator; notification of students and examiners; and, for possible consolidation with other examinations.

**(d)** May be scheduled so that the written and practical exams are on separate days or, may be scheduled so that both are conducted (consecutively) on the same day provided that:

- At least a one hour break is afforded each candidate between the practical and written portions; and,
- Candidates are informed that they have the option of taking the written exam on a separate day if they so choose.

**(e)** Practical portions shall be structured so as to limit the total practical exam time by keeping the candidates to a reasonable number and following practical exam guidelines. The ideal practical exam should be no more than 3 - 4 hours in duration (excluding setup, examiner/candidate orientation and cleanup). Situations requiring more than 4 hours of total time to conduct a practical examination must be pre-approved by Maine EMS.

(f) Registration

- (i) All candidates must register for exams prior to the exam date; candidates must be encouraged to register well in advance to ensure exam access. Walk in requests will NOT be honored without proof of pre-registration and eligibility.
- (ii) Candidates are required to show proof of exam registration and proof of identity (if requested) to the Exam Administrator or Exam Proctor.
- (iii) Only those candidates qualified to take the level of exam being given will be admitted. Candidates must have completed a Maine EMS approved program at the level for which they are requesting examination.
- (iv) Exam Registration will be completed by the regional office in the region that the individual will take the exam.
- (v) Candidates who are taking the exam based upon training received outside of the Maine EMS system (e.g. out of state; out of country; or military) must receive a letter of authorization from the Maine EMS office. Maine EMS will copy authorization letters to the appropriate regional office and the regional office will register the candidate for the exam.
- (vi) **No weapons of any type are allowed at the site of a Maine EMS written or practical exam.** This restriction must be clearly communicated to the exam candidate at the time of registration. An Exam Administrator or Exam Proctor has the authority to dismiss a candidate from an exam if the Exam Administrator or Exam Proctor determines that the candidate has a weapon on his or her possession and the candidate refuses to remove the weapon from the exam site.

For further information on the Exam Application see Appendices C and D.

## **E. EXAM SECURITY**

Persons involved in the administration of Maine EMS licensing exams shall adhere to the Maine EMS Exam Security Policy (See Appendix A)

## **F. EXAMINATION MATERIALS**

Examinations and examination supplies shall be stored, transferred and utilized in accordance with the Maine EMS Exam Security Policy (see Appendix A).

## **G. SPECIAL EXAMINATIONS BY REQUEST**

1. Maine EMS may authorize special examinations by request. The purpose of this exception is to enable large employers or other entities to hold exams where and when convenient to them.
2. A request for a special exam shall be made in writing to Maine EMS. If the request is approved by Maine EMS, the following shall apply:

**(a) Maine EMS Responsibilities:**

- (i) Determine that an adequate number of Exam Administrators and Examiners are available for the date requested.
- (ii) Determine that the appropriate equipment is available.

**(b) Requesting Agency Responsibilities:**

- (i) Provide a facility acceptable to Maine EMS.
- (ii) Fund the entire cost of the examination in advance.

3. The requesting entity is financially responsible for any and all costs associated with conducting the exam, to wit:

**(a)** The reimbursement (at the current Maine EMS rate) for Exam Administrator(s), Examiners and programmed patients - to include wages, travel time, waiting time, travel Expenses and meals.

**(b) Equipment** rental/use, and other reasonable costs.

All such payments will be made in advance to Maine EMS. Maine EMS is responsible for reimbursement to the Exam Administrators, Examiners and programmed patients.

### ***III. WRITTEN EXAMS***

#### **A. PREPARATION**

##### **1. Scheduling**

(a) **Written** examinations shall be scheduled in accordance with the section II.D. of this manual.

##### **2. Location**

The Maine EMS written exam will be given in a quiet location where the potential for distraction has been minimized. Candidates must be seated in such manner as to decrease the opportunity to observe the answers of other candidates. The exam atmosphere must be professional but should not be threatening.

##### **3. Materials**

(a) Materials required to conduct a First Responder written exam

- ✓ National Registry First Responder Examination Booklets
- ✓ National Registry Answer Sheets
- ✓ Exam Roster
- ✓ #2 Pencils (Note: #2 pencils required for scannable exams)
- ✓ Blank Paper (enough to supply one sheet to each candidate)
- ✓ Clock
- ✓ Pencil Sharpener

(b) Materials required to conduct an EMT-Basic written exam

- ✓ National Registry EMT-Basic Examination Booklets
- ✓ National Registry Answer Sheets
- ✓ Exam Roster
- ✓ #2 Pencils (Note: #2 pencils required for scannable exams)
- ✓ Blank Paper (enough to supply one sheet to each candidate)
- ✓ Clock
- ✓ Pencil Sharpener

(c) Materials required to conduct an EMT-Intermediate written exam

- ✓ Maine EMS EMT-Intermediate Examination Booklets
- ✓ Answer Sheets
- ✓ Answer Key
- ✓ Exam Roster
- ✓ Pencils

- ✓ Red Correction Pens
- ✓ Score Summary Sheets
- ✓ Blank Paper (enough to supply one sheet to each candidate)
- ✓ Pencil Sharpener

**(d) Materials required to conduct an EMT-Paramedic written exam**

- ✓ Maine EMS EMT-Paramedic Examination Booklets
- ✓ Answer Sheets
- ✓ Answer Key
- ✓ Exam Roster
- ✓ Pencils
- ✓ Red Correction Pens
- ✓ Score Summary Sheets
- ✓ Blank Paper (enough to supply one sheet to each candidate)
- ✓ Clock
- ✓ Pencil Sharpener

## **B. ADMINISTRATION**

### **1. Admittance to an Exam**

**(a)** All candidates are required to apply for admission to exams prior to the exam date. Candidates must be encouraged to register well in advance to ensure exam access, and must provide proof that they are qualified to take the level of exam for which they are applying.

To be qualified to register for an exam, a candidate must provide the regional office with a valid Maine EMS course certificate or demonstrate to the regional office that Maine EMS has approved his or her training and has authorized the candidate to take the Maine EMS Exam.

**(b)** Only pre-registered candidates will be admitted to the exam. The Exam Proctor may request that any candidate provide positive identification in order to be admitted to the exam.

**(c)** If the candidate arrives after the examination process has commenced, it is up to the Exam Proctor's discretion as to whether candidates who arrive late for an exam will be allowed to participate. Should the proctor allow a candidate to begin an exam late, the proctor must insure that the candidate is allowed the standard time in which to complete the exam.

**(d)** Candidates must be able to read the exam and complete their own answer sheet. Oral exams are not allowed. The Exam Proctor is not allowed to assist the candidate with the exam (e.g. pronounce a word; rephrase or interpret questions for candidates).

(e) Appendix F contains a specific instructions for the written exam process

## **2. Time Limits**

(a) The time allowed for completion of the EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate, and EMT-Paramedic written exam is 2 hours 30 minutes. The time allowed for completion of the First Responder written exam is 1 hour 40 minutes.

(b) If a candidate has received an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), additional time may be allowed for completion of the written exam (usually 1.5 times the amount of time normally allowed for completion of the exam. Therefore the accommodation for a First Responder candidate would be a total of 2 hours, 30 minutes to take the exam; for an EMT-B, Intermediate, or Paramedic the total time allowed would be 3 hours, 45 minutes ). An accommodation may only be granted by Maine EMS (See Appendix B for details).

## **3. Cheating**

(a) Candidates found cheating will have their exam booklets and answer sheets removed and will be dismissed from the exam. Such candidates will be ineligible to take another written Maine EMS exam for 1 (one) year following the offense.

(b) In the event a candidate is dismissed from an exam because of cheating, the Exam Proctor will write up a report detailing the incident and forward this to Maine EMS the next day.

(c) Every attempt should be made to discourage cheating by organizing seating appropriately and by clearly stating exam instructions to the candidates.

## **4. Confidentiality of Student Performance Information**

An individual candidate's performance is confidential, except that such information must be made available to Maine EMS or its designees upon request.

## **5. Passing Grade**

(a) The passing grades for Maine EMS written licensing examinations are:

(i) 75% for the EMT-Intermediate and EMT-Paramedic levels

(ii) 70% for the First Responder and EMT-Basic levels.

**Note:** Due to the adoption by Maine EMS of the National Registry exams at the First Responder and EMT-B levels, Maine EMS adopted NREMT's scoring (70%) as the minimum passing score. Since the Intermediate and Paramedic

exams are based upon Maine EMS blueprints for exams, the 75% minimum score has been maintained for these levels.

## **6. Failure of the Exam/Re-test Options**

- (a) Inform the candidate as soon as possible that he or she has failed the written exam and advise the candidate to contact his or her regional office for re-test options.
- (b) A candidate who fails the written exam may retake the exam the next time the exam is scheduled or at the Exam Proctor's convenience, but not on the same day the exam was failed. If a candidate fails the written exam a third time, he or she must take a Maine EMS approved refresher training program for the level of the exam being challenged and then must retake the entire written and practical examination.
- (c) If a candidate has failed the exam for a third time and wishes to take a lower level exam, that candidate must complete a Maine EMS refresher program for the level of licensure sought in order to qualify for a fourth exam attempt (regardless of its level).

## **7. Post Exam Security**

When all candidates have completed their written examination, it is the responsibility of the Exam Proctor to ensure accountability of each exam booklet. Exam Proctors will complete an Exam Proctor Reimbursement and Accountability Form (See Appendix N) each time an exam is administered. This form is submitted to Maine EMS.

## **8. Rosters**

- (a) The Exam Proctor will complete a roster of the candidates taking the written exam. See Appendix I for a copy of the exam roster and instructions for completing it.
- (b) Each name must be printed in blue or black ink and spelled correctly. Candidates currently licensed (or previously licensed) should spell their names as they appear on their licenses.
- (c) Names that have been changed must be noted so that appropriate changes in the licensing file can be made.
- (d) A separate roster must be filled out for each level of licensure exam.
- (e) The exam roster must be signed by the Exam Proctor in order for it to be complete. The roster must be returned to the regional EMS office and then to Maine EMS.

## **9. Return of Materials**

Once the exam has been completed, all materials must be accounted for and returned to the Regional or Maine EMS office within 1 business day. Exams and materials must be returned in accordance with the Maine EMS Exam Security Policy (Appendix A).

## **10. Assessment Exams**

Maine EMS utilizes the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians' *Assessment Exam* for those exam candidates who are ineligible to become NREMT registered but meet the requirements for Maine EMS licensure. An Assessment Exam is administered when:

- (a) the candidate is less than 17 years of age;
- (b) the candidate has been granted an exam accommodation by Maine EMS, but not from the NREMT.
- (c) the candidate's initial course is greater than 2 years old.

A person who is 17 years of age has the option of either taking the National Registry Exam or the Assessment exam. The candidate must be informed about the pros and cons of each exam:

If a 17 year old takes the National Registry exam and successfully completes it, the candidate may receive a Maine EMS license and, may apply for National Registry upon his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. However if the candidate fails the exam, no feedback will be provided as to sections missed.

If a 17 year old takes the assessment exam and successfully completes it, the candidate may receive a Maine EMS license but would not be eligible to apply for National Registry upon his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The candidate would, however receive performance feedback concerning the assessment exam.

See Appendix C for information about the Assessment exam and Appendix O regarding submission of exams taken by 17 year olds..

## ***IV. PRACTICAL EXAMS***

### **A. PREPARATION**

#### **1. Scheduling**

The practical examination shall be scheduled in accordance with section II.D of this manual.

#### **2. Exam Site**

(a) The exam site for a Maine EMS practical exam:

- (i) must have adequate floor space, ventilation, tables, chairs, temperature control and bathroom facilities.
- (ii) must include an area near the rotation board where candidates can wait for station assignment.
- (iii) will accommodate a floor plan that provides for station distribution- allowing room between stations to minimize interference and to minimize the possibility of an unfair advantage for any candidate.

#### **3. Paperwork**

See Appendix J for administrative supplies and information.

#### **4. Equipment**

(a) A checklist of the materials needed to conduct a practical exam can be found in Appendix J. The equipment needed for each station is identified on each exam station instruction page (See Appendix L). As the Exam Administrator, you must do the following:

- (i) Identify the number of stations required for the exam as well as all equipment and supplies needed.
- (ii) Ensure that supplies and equipment are at the exam site as required and in working order.
- (iii) Ensure that equipment and supplies for each skills station are properly distributed and set up.
- (iv) Ensure that a sufficient quantity of disposable supplies is available for the practical examination.

## **(b) Rotation Board**

It is recommended that a rotation board or a rotation system be used to keep the flow of candidates rotating through the stations moving smoothly.

## **5. Exam Administrator Assistants, Examiners and Programmed Patients**

**(a)** In order to successfully manage an exam, an adequate number of qualified examiners and programmed patients are needed. Exam Administrators will ensure that only qualified examiners, approved by the region and Maine EMS, are used in the exam process. In extraordinary circumstances, an Exam Administrator may utilize another individual whom the Administrator determines is qualified by training and experience as an examiner. The Exam Administrator will notify the regional coordinator of the circumstances and rationale should the aforementioned situation arise.

**(i)** When at all possible, a certified CPR instructor should examine at the CPR station.

**(ii)** An examiner may test at a skills station those skills that are at the examiner's certification/licensure level or below.

**(iii)** At advanced level testing, EMT - Basics may be permitted to examine at the bleeding, splinting and spinal immobilization stations, and at the CPR section of the cardiac station.

**(iv)** Except in extraordinary circumstances, subject to the approval of the Exam Administrator, an examiner shall not test candidates to whom they are related; who are affiliated with the examiner's service; or who were trained in a program in which the examiner participated in teaching.

**(v)** The responsibility for obtaining examiners and programmed patients may differ in each region. In some regions the Regional Coordinator and Regional EMS Office personnel arrange for the personnel; in other regions this is done by the Exam Administrator. In all cases, it is important that examiners be scheduled in accordance with the table provided (see Appendix J) and their commitment to attend must be confirmed.

**(b)** In order to make the Exam Administrator as accessible as possible at the practical exam site, it is recommended that the Exam Administrator arrange for one or two assistants - one to run the rotation board and one to record test results. These assistants will receive the same reimbursement as an examiner at a station.

## **B. ADMINISTRATION**

## **1. Exam Administrator Responsibilities**

- (a) Plan, coordinate and oversee delivery of the state practical exam.
- (b) Ensure that equipment is available and has either been set up prior to the date of the exam, or that sufficient time is allowed on the date of the exam in which to set up stations. Ideally, all stations should be set up prior to the arrival of examiners and exam candidates.
- (c) Ensure that stations are arranged so as to minimize noise and distraction at each station.
- (d) Assign/orientate examiners and programmed patients:
  - (i) Welcome and assign examiners and programmed patients to their respective stations.
  - (ii) Have each examiner and programmed patient fill out the Maine EMS Examiner Payment Record Form and a State of Maine Vendor Payment Form, as necessary. If an examiner or programmed patient has previously completed a Vendor Form, and the information contained on that previously completed form is current, then the examiner or programmed patient need not fill out another form. (See Appendix N for a vendor form and information regarding form completion).
  - (iii) Conduct examiner/programmed patient orientation as outlined in Appendix K.
- (e) Welcome exam candidates and conduct candidate orientation prior to the examination (See Appendix K).

## **2. Special Circumstances or Problems**

### **(a) The Exam Administrator as Examiner**

The Exam Administrator should not test or re-test candidates. His or her responsibility is to serve as a point of appeal in the event that a dispute arises from a candidate's failure. If it is necessary for an Exam Administrator to test or re-test a candidate, any subsequent dispute must be referred to a Maine EMS Staff member.

- (b) If problems arise during the planning, coordination or delivery of the practical exam, the problems must be referred to the Exam Administrator who is to address and attempt to resolve whatever problems may arise.

(c) Disputes regarding candidates associated with an Exam Administrator (through service affiliation, relative, etc.) must be resolved by a third party such as a Maine EMS representative or another Exam Administrator.

(d) If a majority of the candidates are associated with an Exam Administrator in the above manner, a different Exam Administrator must conduct the examination to avoid any potential conflict of interest.

(e) If during an exam a problem should arise which the Exam Administrator is unable to adequately address, the Exam Administrator should contact a Maine EMS staff member (see the Maine EMS website at [www.maine.gov/dps/ems](http://www.maine.gov/dps/ems) for contact names and numbers). If the situation cannot be resolved at the exam, it must be brought to the attention of Maine EMS the next business day.

(f) If a candidate must leave the exam before completing all of the stations, the Exam Administrator may allow the candidate to register for another exam in order to complete those stations at a later date. The stations to be completed must be noted on the exam section of the candidate's license application.

The circumstances requiring a candidate to leave an exam before its completion should be only of a serious, unavoidable nature such as illness or a family emergency, or if response by the candidate is required due to an unusual circumstance such as a mass casualty situation.

(g) Inappropriate Behavior – See Appendix P

## **C. POST EXAMINATION**

### **1. Paperwork**

(a) Verify that the candidate has completed all of the required stations and then sign the exam section of the applicant's license application form. Completion of this form is the candidate's proof of having passed the Maine EMS practical exam. The Exam Administrator will fill out the exam section of the form to include the level of exam completed by the candidate; the pass/fail/retest status of the candidate; and the date. The Exam Administrator will then sign in ink and return the form to the candidate before the candidate leaves the exam site.

(b) If a candidate fails either the written or the practical exam three times, the candidate's license application form will not be returned to the candidate, but will be returned to the Regional Office or Maine EMS on the next business day.

### **(c) Rosters**

(i) The Exam Administrator must complete a roster of the candidates taking the practical exam. Record the candidate's name, date of birth, and pass/fail status for

each station. Each name must be printed in blue or black ink and spelled correctly. Candidates who are currently licensed (or previously licensed) should ensure that their names are spelled on the roster as they appear (or appeared) on their licenses.

(ii) A separate roster must be filled out for each level of licensure exam.

(iii) The Exam Roster must be signed by the Exam Administrator in order for it to be complete. (See Appendix I for more information).

**(d) Return of Exam Records**

Maine EMS requires that all exam records be returned via the regional office to Maine EMS for storage.

**2. Equipment**

Pick up and return all equipment and gather up all exam materials.

**3. Exam monitoring**

Maine EMS or its delegates may monitor exams at random intervals or for specific problems in a continuing effort to improve and standardize licensing exams.

## **Updates and Changes to the Maine EMS Exam Manual**

4/13/04 - Bleeding Station Appendix – General & Examiner Information concerning integration of NSC information into examination process for bleeding.

12/02/04 – Appendix N – Add 2004 revision of State of Maine Vendor Form and Instructions.

01/27/06 – Appendix L – Add revised instructions for EMT-I and Paramedic spinal immobilization instructions. The revisions changes the spinal immobilization station so that a student is assessed on either the interim spinal immobilization device or helmet removal and patient placement on a longboard.